بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Pearls of Islam

Pillars, Art, People, Traditions, Values



Diary,
Notepaper,
Textbook
... For everyone

By Soumy Ana

http://www.ummah.net/islam/taqwapalace

What are the Qur'an and the Sunnah ?



The Qur'an is the last revealed word of Allah and the basic source of Islamic teachings and laws. Qur'an deals with a variety of subjects including the basic beliefs of Islam: morality, worship, knowledge, wisdom, Allah and man's relationship, and human relations. Comprehensive teachings upon which sound systems of social justice, economics, politics, legislation, jurisprudence, law and international relations can be built, are important contents of the Holy Qur'an.

The Qur'an is divided into chapters called ***Surahs*** or ***surats.***

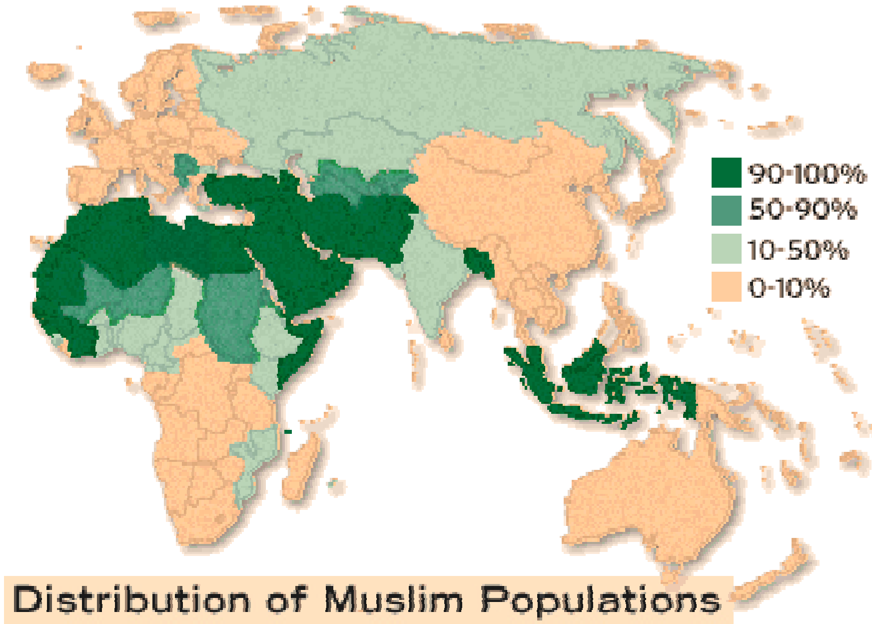
Though Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم did not receive a formal education, the Qur'an, as soon as it was revealed to him in the spoken word, was committed to writing by his sribes. In this way, every word was written down and preserved during his lifetime by his Companions. The original and complete text of the Qur'an is in Arabic language and interpretations of its meaning in most of the known languages are available in major libraries and bookstores.

Hadiths are books recording the teaching, sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, meticulously reported and collected by his devoted companions. *Hadith* books explain and elaborate the Qur'anic verses; they constitute the *Sunnah* or a behavior code.

Since prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was a perfect example of what Allah Almighty asked from humans, his example is followed by all his followers, even in the manner of eating, sleeping, etc.

"Thus we have appointed
you as middle nation,
that you may be witnesses upon
mankind" (Qur'an 11:43)

Islam was destined to become a world religion and to create a civilization which stretched from one end of the globe to the other. Already during the early Muslim caliphates, first the Arabs, then the Persians and later the Turks set about to create a classical Islamic civilization. Later, in the 13th century, both Africa and India became great centers of Islamic civilization and soon thereafter Muslim kingdoms were established in the Malay-Indonesian world while Chinese Muslims flourished throughout China.



"I hope that in the next century we will come to terms with our abysmal ignorance of the Muslim world. Muslims aren't a bunch of wackos and nuts. They are decent, brilliant, talented people with a great civilization and traditions of their own, including legal traditions. Americans know nothing about them. There are people in that part of the world with whom we are simply out of touch. That's a great challenge for the next century."

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, December 1999 (ABC NEWS)

"Islam is the best chance the poor of the planet have of any hope of decency in their lives. It is one revolutionary force that cares about humanity."

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, 1998 (ABC News)

What is Islam ?



One day while the Prophet was sitting in the company of some people, (The angel) Gabriel came and asked, "What is faith?" Allah's Apostle replied, 'Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, (the) meeting with Him, His Apostles, and to believe in Resurrection." Then he further asked, "What is Islam?" Allah's Apostle replied, "To worship Allah Alone and none else, to offer prayers perfectly to pay the compulsory charity (Zakat) and to observe fasts during the month of Ramadan." Then he further asked, "What is Ihsan (perfection)?" Allah's Apostle replied, "To worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you cannot achieve this state of devotion then you must consider that He is looking at you." Then he further asked, "When will the Hour be established?" Allah's Apostle replied, "The answerer has no better knowledge than the questioner…"

Hadith 001.002.047 - Belief - Narrated Abu Huraira:

I was informed by Abu Sufyan that Heraclius said to him, "I asked you whether they (followers of Muhammad) were increasing or decreasing. You replied that they were increasing. And in fact, this is the way of true Faith till it is complete in all respects. I further asked you whether there was anybody, who, after embracing his (the Prophets) religion (Islam) became displeased and discarded it. You replied in the negative, and in fact, this is (a sign of) true faith. When its delight enters the heart and mixes with them completely, nobody can be displeased with it."

Hadith 001.002.048 - Belief -Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas



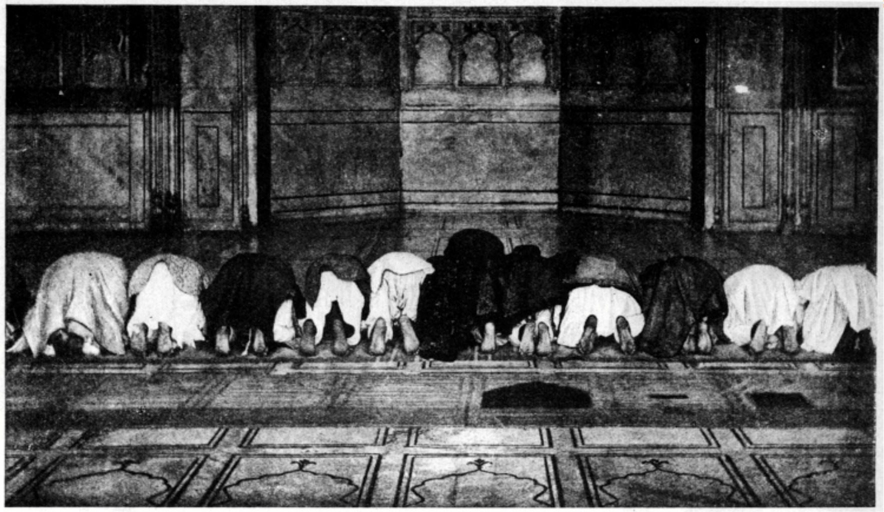
Inimitability of the Qur'an

Alî bin Rabbân at-Tabarî who was Nestorian Christian, and at the age of 70 converted to Islam, asserts that he has never in any language found stylistic perfection equaling that of the Qur'ân:

When I was a Christian I used to say, as did an uncle of mine who was one of the learned and eloquent men, that eloquence is not one of the signs of prophethood because it is common to all the peoples; but when I discarded (blind) imitation and (old) customs and gave up adhering to (mere) habit and training and reflected upon the meanings of the Qur'ân I came to know that what the followers of the Qur'ân claimed for it was true. The fact is that I have not found any book, be it by an Arab or a Persian, an Indian or a Greek, right from the beginning of the world up to now, which contains at the same time praises of God, belief in the prophets and apostles, exhortations to good, everlasting deeds, command to do good and prohibition against doing evil, inspiration to the desire of paradise and to avoidance of hell-fire as this Qur'ân does. So when a person brings to us a book of such qualities, which inspires such reverence and sweetness in the hearts and which has achieved such an overlasting success and he is (at the same time) an illiterate person who did never learnt the art of writing or rhetoric, that book is without any doubt one of the signs of his Prophethood.

Abdul Aleem, I'jaz ul Qur'ân, Islamic Culture, Op. Cit., pp. 222-223.

Prayers



The Qur'an and Hadith on Prayer

Be ever mindful of prayers,
and of praying in the most excellent way;
and stand before Allaah in devout obedience.

Qur'an 2:238

Truly, to a happy state shall attain the believers:
those who humble themselves in their prayer,
and who turn away from all that is frivolous,
and who are intent on inner purity.

Qur'an 23:1-4

Extol, then, God's limitless glory when you enter upon the evening hours, and when you rise at morn; and seeing that unto Him is due all praise in the heavens and earth, glorify Him in the afternoon as well, and when you enter upon the hour of noon.

Qur'an 30:17-18

And before God prostrate themselves, willingly or unwillingly,
all things and beings that are in the heavens and the earth,
as do their shadows in the mornings and the evenings.

Qur'an 13:15

Our Lord (glorified and exalted be He) descends each night to the earth's sky when there remains the final third of the night, and He says:
"Who is saying a prayer to Me that I may answer it?
Who is asking something of Me that I may give it him?
Who is asking forgiveness of Me that I may forgive him?"

Hadith Qudsi 35

Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad

صلى اللّٰه عليه وسلم

(peace and blessings upon him.)

Selected and Translated by Kabir Helminski **1**



ISLAM began as something strange, and it will become thus again, as it was at the beginning. Blessed, therefore, are the strangers.
(He was asked who the strangers are:)
The strangers are those **who restore what the people have corrupted of my law**, as well as those who **revive what has been destroyed** of it.

You will not enter paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you **love one another**. Let me guide you to something in the doing of which you will love one another. Give a greeting to everyone among you.

I was delegated as a prophet to perfect moral virtues.

Good character is half of faith.

God is merciful to those who **show mercy** to others.

Power consists not in being able to strike another, but in being able to control oneself when anger arises.

Honor your children and thus improve their manners.

The three best things: to **be humble amidst the vicissitudes of fortune; to pardon when powerful; and to be generous with no strings attached.**

Whoever does not express his **gratitude** to people will never be grateful to God.

The best people are those who are **most useful to others**.

Living among others is a cause for blessing, while seclusion is the cause of torment.

Happy is the person who finds fault with himself instead of finding fault with others.

From morning until night and from night until morning keep your heart **free from malice** towards anyone.

Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad

صلى اللهعليه وسلم

Selected and Translated by Kabir Helminski **2**



A perfect Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands mankind is safe.

Islam is **purity of speech and hospitality**.

Every religion has a distinctive virtue and the distinctive virtue of Islam is **modesty.**

Greet those whom you know and those whom you don't know.

When asked what was most excellent in a human being, he answered, "A **friendly** disposition."

The best of God's servants are those who when seen remind you of God; and the worst of God's servants are those who spread tales to do mischief and separate friends, and look for the faults of the good.

Whoever believes in one God and the Hereafter let him **speak what is good** or remain silent.

He is the best Muslim whose **disposition is most liked by his own family**.

Respect the guest and do not inconvenience your neighbors.

The faithful are as one person. If a man complains of a pain in his head, his whole body complains; and if his eye complains, his whole body complains.

He is not of us who is not affectionate to the little ones and does not respect the reputation of the old.

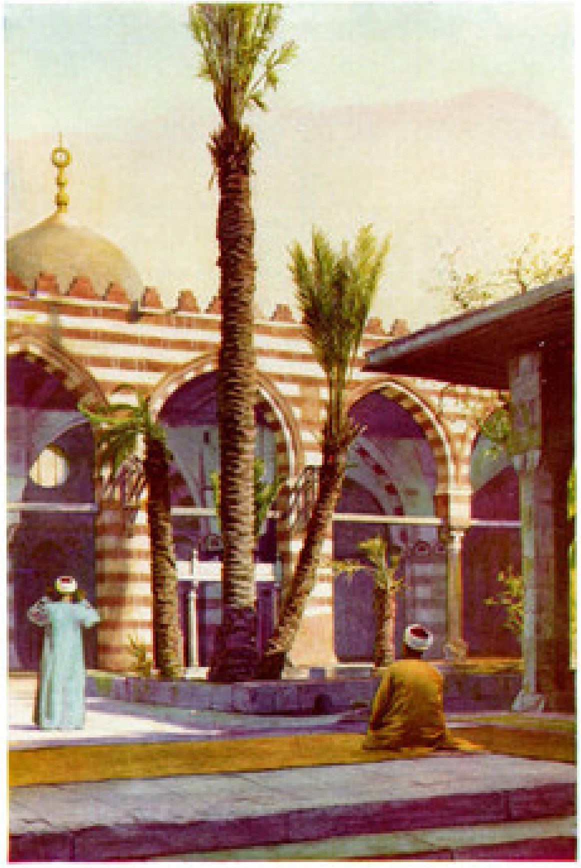
The Gift of Salaah

When Allah Ta'ala (سبحانه وتعلى) called Rasoolullah (Prophet Muhammad صلى اللّٰه عليه وسلم) he was given such a special gift, namely the love for *Scallah* (prayer).

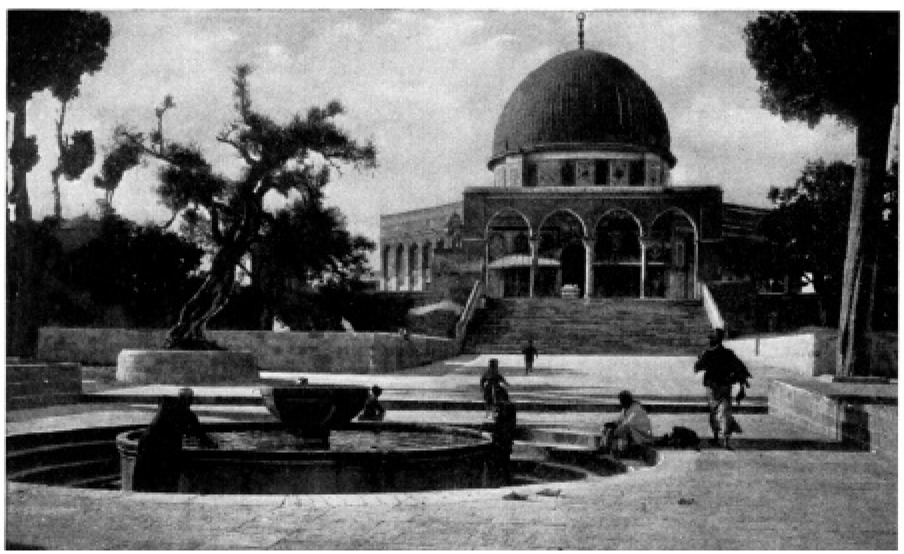
This gift was not restricted to him alone, but was passed on to the *Ummah* (Muslim community) - Allah (The Only One God) (سبحانه وتعلى) gave this precious gift to His Beloved, and from His Beloved it was passed on to the *Ummah.* And it is in reference to this gift that Allah says, "Guard your salaah."

In his time, Allah spoke to Moosa (moises عليه السلام) , and he was told "Establish salaah for My remembrance".

The *me'raj* of Rasoolullah was this unique meeting with, and witness of, Allah. This meeting was the *me'raj* of Rasoolullah, the *me'raj* of Moosa was his being spoken to, and the *me'raj* of the mu'min (true believer) is salaah. "As salaahu me'raj al mu'min."



Preparation for prayer



If you look at the preparation required for prayer, you will see how Allah has given special blessings in it. So what will be the blessings for the salaah itself? The preparation for the *salaah* (prayer) is wudhu (ablutions) - this is the prerequisite for salaah. When a person washes his hands for *wudhu*, Allah washes away all the sins committed by those hands, and when he washes his mouth Allah washes away, with the water of *wudhu*, all the sins committed by the mouth. Whatever sins were committed by the eyes or the mouth are wiped away with the water. And when he finally washes his feet, all the sins which were committed through them are also wiped away with the water. All the sins are removed from the body with the last drop of the *wudhu* water.

This is the preparation for the *salaah* - so now you can judge the importance of the *salaah* itself. If all the sins have been washed away in the preparation, what will the *salaah* confer?

So just by preparing for *salaah* all the sins are washed away.

In another hadith about *wudhu*, Rasoolullah (the Prophet of God, i.e., Muhammad) said,

> "Make *wudhu* all the time, for it will become a light for you on the day of judgement. I will recognise my *ummah* (the Muslim community) by the light of the *wudhu* that the *ummah* performed, because all the parts of their body will be shining with that light."

See how important it is to do *wudhu*, for this is how we will be recognized. What about those people who also pray five times a day? Rasoolullah will recognize the people who made *wudhu*, but He will love the people who prayed their *salaah*. Look at its importance, how can a person leave the *salaah*?



Guardians of Salaahs

"Be guardians of your prayer and of the mid-most prayer
and stand up with devotion to Allah;
and if you go in fear then pray standing or on horseback,
and when you are again in safety
then remember Allah, as he has taught you that which
before now you knew not."

Once Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood, a very famous companion of Rasoolullah (Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), asked about the importance of deeds. He requested Rasoolullah to please inform him as to which deed is most loved by Allah . The Prophet replied, "It is Prayer"(*salaah*). In another hadith, Rasoolullah said, "Allah has selected a very good deed for a Muslim, and that deed is *salaah*". These Ahadith should make one realize the importance of *salaah* in the *Deen* (religion). Don't think lightly of *salaah*. It is the most important thing after the acquisition of faith. In another *hadith*, Rasoolullah has stated,

"The first question that will be asked on the day of judgement will be about *salaah*. If your *salaah* proves to be good then all your other deeds will be good; if your *salaah* appears shabby and rotten, then there will be no goodness for you."

Out of all your deeds, the first to be judged will be the *salaah*. Ibn Umar relates another *hadith* in which Rasoolullah compared *salaah* to the head on one's body. If you take away the head then what is left of the body? If you have the *salaah* then you have the *deen*, but if there is no *salaah* then there is no *deen*. *Khushoo* (concentration) is important too as well as to know how to dress properly for both men and women.

Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم
Selected and Translated by Kabir Helminski - **3**

Truly, the farthest seat from me on the day of resurrection will be the garrulous, those who talk glibly, and those who talk tall. And who is it that talk tall? The vain-glorious.

God is gentle and loves gentleness.

Inscribed on the prophet's sword:

Forgive him who wrongs you;
join him who cuts you off;
do good to him who does evil to you;
and speak the truth even if it be against yourself.

Whoever **restrains his anger** when he has the power to show it, God will give him a great reward.

Backbiting is more grievous than adultery, and **God will not forgive the backbiter** until the one wronged has forgiven him.

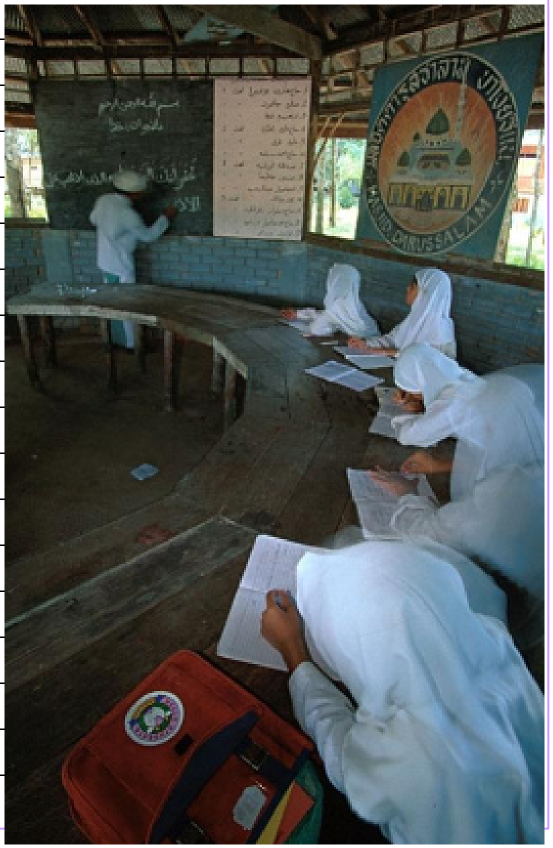
Keep yourselves far from envy, because it eats up and takes away good actions as fire consumes and burns the wood.

What actions are most excellent?
To gladden the heart of a human being,
to feed the hungry, to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful, and to remove the wrongs of the injured.



Learning

I looked at all friends and did not find a better friend than safeguarding the tongue.
I thought about all the dresses but did not find a better dress than piety.
I thought about all sorts of wealth but did not find a better wealth than contentment in a little.
I thought of all sorts of good deeds but did not find a better deed than offering good advice.
I looked at all types of sustenance but did not find a better sustenance than patience.
Umar (RAA)



Washing away ones Sins



Once on a beautiful Autumn morning, the Holy Prophet was out with his beloved companion Abu Dharr. He broke one branch off a tree and he shook it until all the leaves had fallen off the branch onto the floor. He told his beloved companion Abu Dharr, "See how all the leaves have left the branch? Likewise when a person sincerely prays *Salaah*, all his sins are shaken off."

Hadith (Ahmad)

In another *hadith* Rasoolullah said, "If there was a canal running in front of someone's house, and that person washed five times a day in that canal, then would there sins are washed away in the same manner."

Hadith (Bukhari & Muslim)

Another *hadith*: the Holy Prophet said that at prayer times, angels fly around in the sky saying, "O people get up and cool the fire of Hell, which you have caused to rage around you with your sins".

***(Hadith* Tabrani)**

Who receives Zakat?

The Holy Qur'an (Sura Al-Tauba: 60) classifies the due recipients of zakat under the following eight categories.

1.**Fakir** - One who has neither material possessions nor means of livelihood.

2.**Miskin** - One with insufficient means of livelihood to meet basic needs.

3.**Amil** - One who is appointed to collect zakat.

4.**Muallaf** - One who converts to Islam.

5.**Riqab** - One who wants to free himself from bondage or the shackles of slavery. (In Singapore, *zakat* due to this category of recipients is spent on those who need help to pursue education or to improve their standard of living).

6.**Gharmin** - One who is in debt (money borrowed to meet basic, *halal* expenditure).

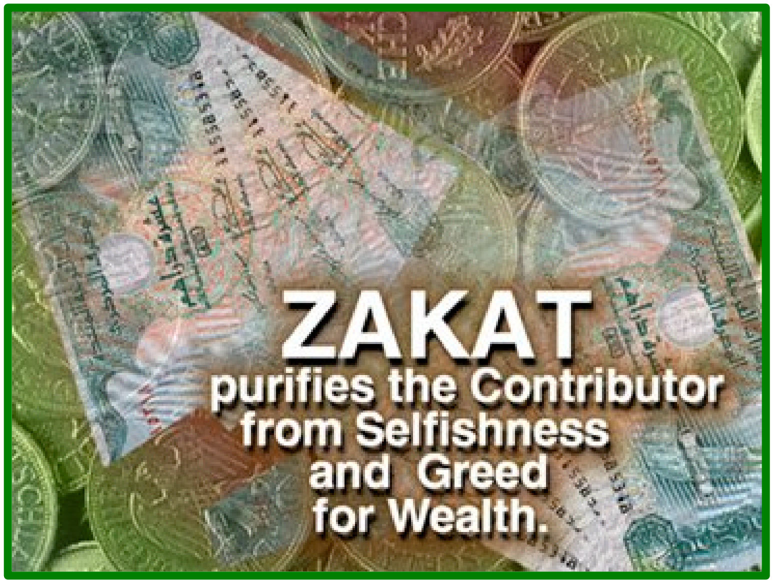
7.**Fisabillillah** - One who fights for the cause of Allah.

8.**Ibnus Sabil** - One who is stranded in journey.

(Source: MUIS in Singapore)



Zakat: obligatory Charity



Literally speaking *Zakat* means ‘grow’ (in goodness) or 'increase', 'purifying' or 'making pure'. So the act of giving *zaka*t means purifying one's wealth to gain Allah's blessing to make it grow in goodness.

One of the most important principles of Islam is that all things belong to Allaah, and that wealth is therefore held by human beings in trust. Our possessions are purified by setting aside a proportion for those in need, and, like the pruning of plants, this cutting back balances and encourages new growth.

Zakah not only purifies the property of the contributor but also **purifies his heart from selfishness and greed**. It also purifies the heart of the recipient from envy and jealousy, from hatred and uneasiness and it fosters instead good-will and warm wishes for the contributors.

--Source: Zakat (the Alms Tax)

ZAKAT: (Alms) The *Zakat* is a form of giving to those who are less fortunate. It is obligatory upon all Muslims to give **2.5 % of wealth and assets each year** (in excess of what is required) to the poor. This is done before the beginning of the month of *Muharram*, the first of new year. Giving the *Zakat* is considered an act of worship because it is a form of offering thanks to Allaah for the means of material well-being one has acquired.

"Take from their wealth a portion for charity,
in order to clean them thereby, and sanctify them."

Walking towards the Salaah / mosque



It is stated that for each of the steps of a person walking towards prayer, his sins are forgiven. Also his status in *jannah* is raised by one grade for each and every step. In another narration, it is stated that a person who goes for prayer receives the reward of one *Hajj*.

Rasoolullah (SAWS) has foretold that **people who come for prayers during the hours of darkness, especially for *Isha, Fajr* and *Maghrib*, will be met by Allah on the day of judgement with His own special light**. Such is the reward for going towards the *salaah*.

Another *hadith* states that if a person leaves *salaah*, he will join himself to both *kufr* (disbelief) and *shirk*. Yet another *hadith* explains how the only difference between *Iman* and *kufr* is *salaah*. So what is the nature of that place where the prayer is performed, namely the *Masjid*? Allah سبحانه وتعلى states, "The places that I love most on the earth are those places where people go and pray." And **for those who help in building these *Masjids* with *Halaal* earnings, Allah will make palaces in *Jannah* (Eden) with pearls and diamonds.**

Those people who clean the *Masjids* will receive a great reward. Allah says that those people who remove just one piece of dirt from a mosque, He prepares for them one palace in *Jannah* (Heavens). One palace for each piece of dirt removed.

Another precious reward is given to people who do service for the *Masjids*, for the Prophet loves these people. In the time of the Prophet a poor old Abysinnian lady used to sweep the mosque and nobody took any notice of her. She died; the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not see her and inquired as to her whereabouts. The *sahaabah* replied "She has passed away." *Rasoolullah* (Muhammad, SAWS) said "You should have told me. Take me to her grave, I want to pray for her." *Rasoolullah* went to her grave and made a special prayer for that lady - all because she used to sweep the *Masjid*. This is the place where people worship Allah with *Salaah*, so people should have respect when they are sitting in such a place. *Rasoolullah* (SAWS) warned us about this, saying "Don't talk about worldly affairs in the *Masjid*." **If anyone talks about business in the mosque then Allah will not confer any blessings on his business. Also, if someone has lost something and makes an announcement about it in the mosque, he will never get that thing back.** People should refrain from shouting or raising their voices in the mosque as well. **The mosque is only for *Dhikrallah* (supplications to Allaah)**. It is for the remembrance of Allah, the highest form of which is the *salaah*. So if you find anyone talking about worldly matters then you should stop him.

Muslims and True Words



The Arab grammarians were excellent linguists in both the realm of phonetics and in that of grammar and syntax. Jonathan Owens' The Foundation of Grammar (1988) as well as a new book just completed by him on medieval Arabic grammar have convincingly demonstrated that, in many ways, the Arab grammarians were way ahead of their time.
Review of Grammaire Fonctionnelle de l'arabe du Coran (Bahmani Nedger) by Alan S Kaye, 1990, The Canadian Journal of Linguistics, Volume 35(4), The Canadian Linguistic Association, pp. 381.

This proves how the language of the Noble Qur'an influenced the entire Arab world. In order to understand the structure of the Qur'an, many scholars studied the Arabic language in great depths, and until now, Arabs artists are often great masters of their language; they can make their audience cry by their choice of words and images. Words have traditionally powerful meanings for Arabs, that is why one is careful of his/her utterances. **In Islam, it is believed that words can lead the worshipper at the gates of Hell.**

Muslims are responsible for their words and they must always choose them carefully or be educated in that sense. Words have long taken the place of certifications and contracts in Islam because they reflect a man's heart, even through contracts existed since early Islam.

Language of The Qur'an



And this Qur'ân is not such as could ever be produced by other than Allah (Lord of the heavens and the earth), but it is a confirmation of (the revelation) which was before it [i.e. the *Taurat* (Torah), and the *Injeel* (Gospel), etc.], and a full explanation of the Book (i.e. laws and orders, etc, decreed for mankind) - wherein there is no doubt from the Lord of the *'Alamin* (mankind, *jinns*, and all that exists).

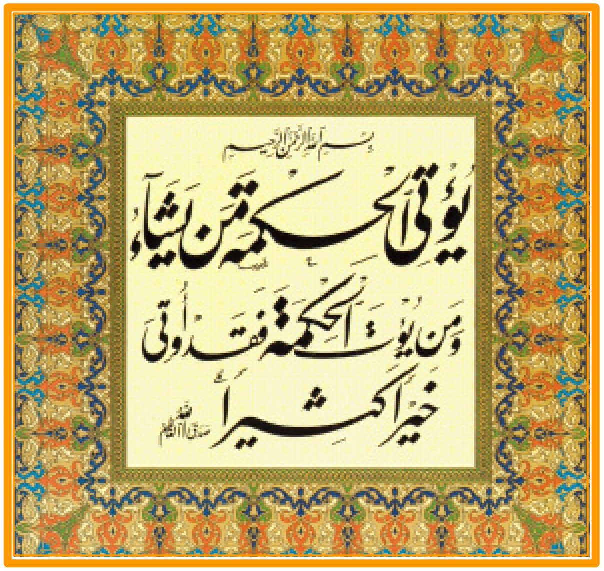
"The Qur'ân is not verse, but it is rhythmic. The rhythm of some verses resembles the regularity of *sajc*, and both are rhymed, while some verses have a similarity to *Rajaz* in its vigor and rapidity. But it was recognized by *Quraysh* critics to belong to neither one nor the other category."

A F L Beeston, T M Johnstone, R B Serjeant and G R Smith (Editors), Arabic Literature To The End Of The Ummayad Period, 1983, Cambridge University Press, pp. 34.

Beauty of The Qur'ân

"The Qur'ân is one of the world's classics which cannot be translated without grave loss. It has a rhythm of peculiar beauty and a cadence that charms the ear. Many Christian Arabs speak of its style with warm admiration, and most Arabists acknowledge its excellence. When it is read aloud or recited it has an almost hypnotic effect that makes the listener indifferent to its sometimes strange syntax and its sometimes, to us, repellent content. **It is this quality it possesses of silencing criticism by the sweet music of its language that has given birth to the dogma of its inimitability;** indeed it may be affirmed that within the literature of the Arabs, wide and fecund as it is both in poetry and in elevated prose, **there is nothing to compare with it**"

Alfred Guillaume, Islam, 1990 (Reprinted), Penguin Books, pp. 73-74.



Uniqueness of The Qur'ân



"That the best of Arab writers has never succeeded in producing anything equal in merit to the Qur'ân itself is not surprising. In the first place, they have agreed beforehand that it is unapproachable, and they have adopted its style as the perfect standard; any deviation from it therefore must of necessity be a defect. Again, with them this style is not spontaneous as with Muhammad and his contemporaries, but is as artificial as though Englishmen should still continue to follow Chaucer as their model, in spite of the changes, which their language has undergone. **With the Prophet, the style was natural, and the words were those in every-day ordinary life**, while with the later Arabic authors the style is imitative and the ancient words are introduced as a literary embellishment. The natural consequence is that their attempts look labored and unreal by the side of his impromptu and forcible eloquence."

E H Palmer (Tr.), The Qur'ân, 1900, Part I, Oxford at Clarendon Press, pp. lv.

Qur'ânic Style

"Because the Qur'ân is composed of Muhammad's صلى الله عليه وسلم revelations only, the Qur'ân does not possess the literary variety of the Bible.
There are, for example, no folk songs in the Qur'ân, no elegies and lamentations, no prophetic rhapsodies, no idyllic poems, and certainly no acrostic. On the other hand, **the Qur'ân possesses a rich literary repertoire of its own**. Besides making a masterful use of language on the level of words and phrases, it contains figures of speech, satire, and irony; employs a variety of narrative and dramatic techniques; and presents characters that, is spite of the sparse personal detail provided about them, come across as vivid figures. For those who can read the Qur'ân in Arabic, the all-pervading rhythm which, in conjunction with the sustained use of what may be called rhymed prose, creates in many *sûrahs* a spellbinding effect that is impossible to reproduce. There is the characteristic terseness of the Qur'ânic language which makes for some complex constructions, but which is difficult to convey in English without being awkward. The existing translations of the Qur'ân impose a further limitation, for they fall so far short of the highly nuanced original that a detailed study of the Qur'ânic language and style on their basis is well-nigh impossible."

Moulton, Richard. The Literary Study Of The Bible, 2nd ed. Boston: D.C. Heath & Co.,1899; 1909 reprint.
See also: The Qur'ân As Literature, by Mustansir Mir. Renaissance, 2000, Volume 10, No. 5.



Allah's Attributes 1



One of Allah's attributes is Al-Musawwir

The Shaper of Beauty

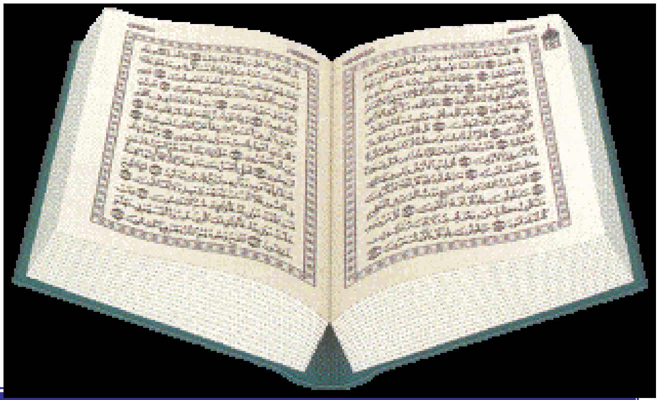
He it is who:
has created for you all that is on earth,
and has applied His design to the heavens
and fashioned them into seven heavens;
and He alone has full knowledge of everything.

Al-Baqarah 2:29, tr. Asad

Everything that is made beautiful and fair and lovely is made for the eye of one who sees.

Mathnawi I:2383, tr. Helminski

Addressing the unbelievers



The Qur'ân is divided into 114 chapters (or *sûrahs*).
The chapters are of varying lengths, from 3 verses to 286 verses.
Many verses address people who refuse Islam or are not converted yet. Why? Because the Qur'an was revealed at the same time the message of Islam was spreading. Verses were actually revealed just before or after the need was strongly felt. It was like Allah was watching over the new converts and was directly teaching them through the mouth of His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.
The period of the compilation of the Qur'ân is rather short. Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was 40 when the Revelation began; he died 30 years later.

"The Qur'ânic challenge was addressed not to the believers but to the unbelievers, and was not simply denunciation of the unbelievers, but constituted an invitation to them to carefully examine the Qur'ân and see if it could have been, as they claimed it was, the product of the mind of a man possessed. Irrespective of what conclusion one reaches on the question of the Qur'ân's origins, one must agree that the underlying assumption of the challenge was that **the merit and beauty of the Qur'ân could be appreciated even by those outside the fold of the faith**. And if that is the case, **then it would be possible to dissociate the literary study of the Qur'ân from the theological study of it**."

A F L Beeston, T M Johnstone, R B Serjeant and G R Smith (Editors), Arabic Literature To The End Of The Ummayad Period, 1983, Cambridge University Press, pp. 34.

Allah's Attributes 2

العدل جل جلاله

One of Allah's Attributes is:
Al-'Adl

The Just

Behold, God enjoins justice, and the
doing of good, and generosity towards
one's fellow-men;
and He forbids all that is shameful
and all that runs counter to reason, as well as envy;
and He exhorts you repeatedly
so that you might bear all this in mind.

An-Nahl 16:90, tr. Muhammad Asad

O God, help me against this self of mine that is
seeking help from You;
I seek justice from no one but from this justice-
seeking self.
I shall not get justice from any one except from
Him who is nearer to me than myself;
For this I-ness comes moment by moment from
Him.

Rumi, Mathnawi I:2195-2198, tr. Helminski

Unity of content



The Qur'ân dealt with a variety of subjects over a period of more than two decades. It is natural that it should come to have **considerable stylistic variety.**

Still, in a certain sense, the Qur'ân is marked by a **unity of content and style** that admits of taking a synchronic approach, especially in a study like the present.

First, historically as well as theologically, the Qur'ânic revelation was mediated through a single individual, Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Second, it is generally agreed that the compilation of the Qur'ânic text was finished, or nearly finished, in a short period of time - within Muhammad's صلى الله عليه وسلم lifetime, according to some authorities.

On these two counts, the Qur'ân comes to possess a unity that would justify taking the Qur'ân in its finished form as the starting point of a literary investigation. To the argument that the Makkan-Madinan division of the Qur'ânic *sûrahs* calls for a diachronic approach since the Makkan *sûrahs* (revealed from 610 to 622) are more poetical and rhetorical and the Madinan (622-632) more discursive and matter-of-fact, one could reply by saying that many literary devices (such as ellipsis) are as characteristic of the Madinan *sûrahs* as they are of the Makkan. It is true, however, that, in general, the Makkan *sûrahs*, with their greater narrative and dramatic element, are best suited for such a study.



Precise & Subtle Words

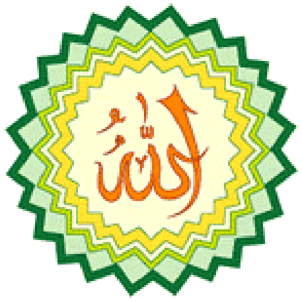
The Qur'ân uses words with precision and subtlety, and often the text yields its full meaning only after a careful re-reading of it.

For example, an impatient Jonah (AS) shakes the dust of Nineveh off his feet and, boarding a ship, departs. Verse 37:140 reads: ‘ When he fled to a laden ship.’

The Arabic word used for 'fled' is ***abaqa***, which is specifically used for a runaway slave. Jonah عليه السلام of course is no slave. But then he is one - a slave of Allaah. This one word imparts a whole new meaning to the incident. Being in the service of Allaah, Jonah عليه السلام ought not to have decided on his own to quit prophesying; he should have waited for God's command. His 'running away' is thus not simply a physical act that may be reported as a historical event; it is an act fraught with moral implications.

In 622 AD, Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and his followers emigrated from Makkah to Madinah. Madinah (literally, 'city'- short for 'city of the Prophet') was formerly known as Yathrib. In the Qur'ân, the city is invariably called 'Madinah' - except once, in 33:13, where it is called 'Yathrib'. The verse reports how, at a time of crisis, a certain group of people deserted the ranks of Muslims, appealing to their compatriots ('O people of Yathrib!') to give up Islam for lost. The use of **'Yathrib' instead of 'Madinah'** graphically portrays the mentality of the deserters: they were convinced that Islam was about to be wiped out and that the city would no longer be the 'city of the Prophet' but would revert to its pagan status, becoming once again 'Yathrib' (Islâhî V:200).

Light in the Qur'ân



Surâh 24:35-40 contains a series of similitude, contrasting the people of faith with the people of disbelief. The contrast is drawn in terms of light and darkness. Surah 24, Verse 35 makes the point that the light of divine guidance is given to one who has kept the natural goodness of his heart intact. Already possessing an inner light, such a person is prepared to receive 'the light of God'. His natural goodness reinforced by faith, he comes to possess 'light upon light'. The verse reads:

> 'God is the light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of his light is as if there is a niche, in which there is a lamp, the lamp in a glass; the glass looks as if it is a bright star. It [the lamp] is kindled from a blessed olive tree that is neither of the east nor of the west, one whose oil all but lights up, even though no fire has touched it. Light upon light! God guides to His light whomever He likes. God strikes similitudes for people, and God has knowledge of all things.'

The niche is the heart of the good man, and in that niche is a lamp that burns with the light of his innate goodness. The high degree of the purity and brightness of the light is emphasised. First, the lamp is enclosed in a glass, so that it has a steady and bright flame and is not put out by the wind. Second, the glass is not dirty but clear and shiny. It is like 'a bright star' so that it reflects the light well. Third, the lamp is fed with olive oil that has been extracted from a tree that was planted not on the fringe of the garden - 'neither of the east nor of the west' - but right in the middle of it, so that, being secure against the fury of the elements, it has yielded the purest kind of oil. The oil, in fact, is so pure that it would catch fire before coming into contact with fire. And when the oil, or the inner goodness of a man, does come into contact with fire or divine guidance, the result is 'light upon light'. Possessing this 'double light', one sees the heavens and the earth lit up, acquiring the master key to all knowledge and understanding, for, as the opening part of the verse says, 'God is the light of the heavens and the earth.'

Accurate images



The Qur'ânic language is frequently picturesque, and among the several devices that account for it are the simile and the similitude. **The similes bear reference to the natural phenomena and existential situation the Arab was most familiar with, but one does not have to be an Arab to feel their force**.

Allaah punished a certain rebellious people by unleashing upon it a wind blast that 'uprooted people as if they were stumps of hollow palm-trees' (54:20).

On the Last Day, people will come out of their graves and will spread out in all directions 'as if they were locusts scattered all over' (54:7).

Disbelievers shy away from the divine message 'as if they are frightened asses that run away from a lion' (74:50-51).

The crescent moon passes through many phases and, after becoming a full moon, again 'becomes like an old twig' (36:39).

The Arabs thought that the mountains were not subject to change, and called them 'the eternal ones'.

When Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم warned them of the Last Day, telling them that the world would be annihilated on that day, they sarcastically asked him, 'What about the mountains? Will they be destroyed too?' The Qur'ân replied by saying that the seemingly immovable mountains will on that day float around 'like carded wool' (101:5).

Fasting during Ramadhan

In Ramadhaan, Allah has made fasting compulsory. It is one of the five pillars of Islam. Just like the flower which outsmarts other flowers in its smell and color, and like the fruit which surpasses the other fruits in its taste, the *Ibaadah (*acts of devotion) of fasting outweighs the other forms of devotions in reward.

A person gives up everything whilst fasting, only to please his Almighty Creator. It is one of the most accepted forms of *Ibaadah*, because Allah Himself will give the reward for fasting.

In this month, the first verses of the Qur'aan was sent down to Prophet Muhammad .

Ramadhaan is a month of countless blessings and virtues. The word **Ramadhaan** is derived from **"ramdh"** which means **"burning of the feet from heat"** This is because of the fast, which burns the sins of a Muslim into ashes.

Muslims stop eating from Dawn to sunset and pray more than usual. For one month, Muslims forget the needs of the body. It is a month given to Allah to show Him gratitude and obedience.

This is the month of patience and the reward of this patience is *Jannah* (Paradise).

This month teaches the lesson of kindness towards others since Muslims multiple acts of kindness towards others. It is also a month where Muslims are very careful not to hurt people by their actions, their words or thought.

Salmaan relates that *Rasoolullah* (The prophet of Allah) said:

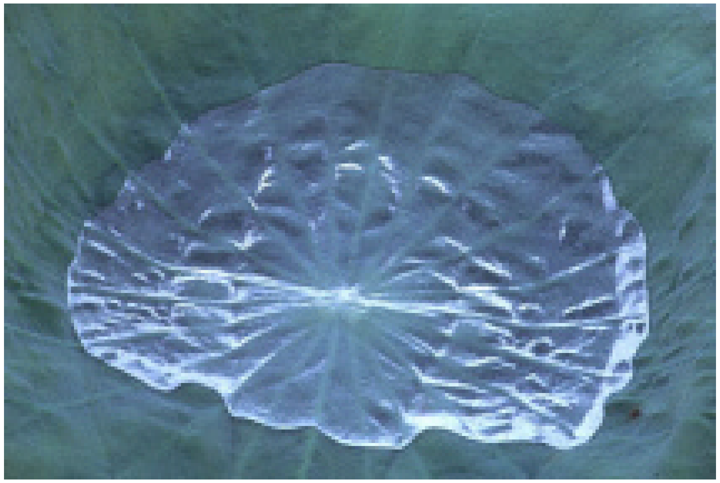
"*Ramadhaan* is a blessed month. In this month is a night better than a 1000 months. "



***Ramadhan* is the time when Muslims spin their rewards with patience & endurance. It is a time of worship and righteous works.**

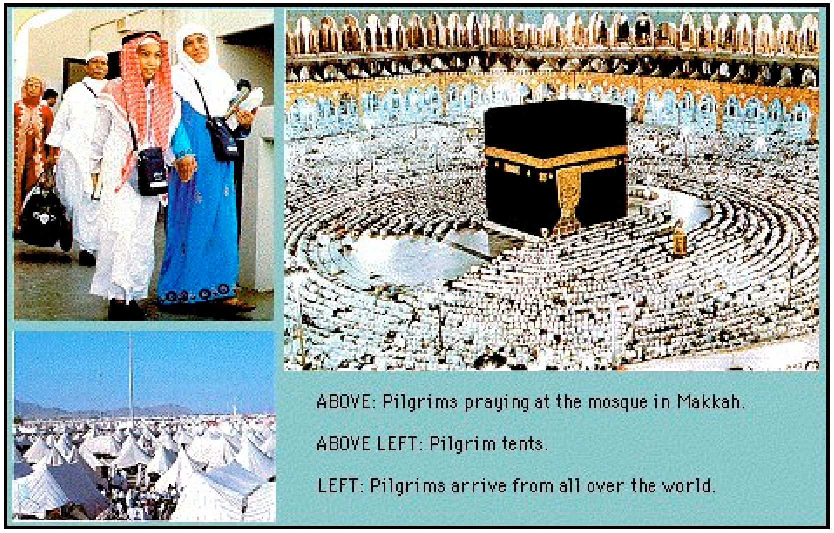
Ablutions

The most essential tenet of Islam that the soul be purified at least five times a day through prayers 'Salat', to strengthen people's commitment to God 'Allah' and to refresh his ambition in his quest for truth. ***Cleanliness and hygiene*** *are the most basic, but vital prerequisites for the maintenance of good health. Muslims care about bathing facilities 'Hammam' for washing and doing the ablutions for prayers in almost everywhere.*



Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca)

Malay pilgrims



ABOVE: Pilgrims praying at the mosque in Makkah.

ABOVE LEFT: Pilgrim tents.

LEFT: Pilgrims arrive from all over the world.

The word ***Hajj*** means, literally, repairing to a place for the sake of visit; it implies repairing to Bait-Allah (the House of Allah, one of the names of al-Ka'aba) to observe the necessary devotions. *Hajj* is not a new institution introduced by Islam, This institution is as old as al-Ka'aba itself which is called in the Holy Koran 'the first House of Divine Worship appointed for mankind' (Qur'an 3:95). This verse corroborates the Hadith (Prophetic Saying) which tell us that al-Ka'ba was first built by Adam, the first man on earth.

Pilgrimage is rightly said to be the perfection of faith since it combines in itself all the distinctive qualities of other obligatory acts of prayer, patience, privation of amenities of life, devotion, *Zakat* (alms) and supplication. In fact, physical pilgrimage is a prelude to spiritual pilgrimage to Allah when man would bid good-bye to everything of the world and present himself before Him as His humble servant saying:

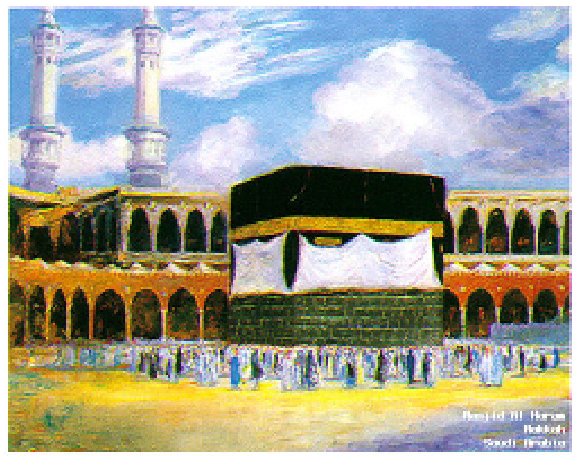
'Here I am before Thee, my Lord, as a slave of Thine.'

Virtues of Hajj (pilgrimage)

Abu Hurayrah reports that Allah's Messenger said:
"Whoever performs *Hajj* and commits no indecent actions nor disobeys Allah, shall return from it as pure and sinless as he was at the time of birth"
(Bukhari and Muslim)

Abu Hurayrah reports that Allah's Messenger(saas) said:
"Those who make the journey for *Hajj* and *Umrah* are the guests of Allah. The supplications they make will be granted, and if they seek forgiveness for their sins, their sins will be forgiven."
(Ibn Majah)

Abdullah ibn Mas'ood reports that Allah's Messenger said:
"Perform *Hajj* and *Umrah* again and again, for both the Hajj and the Umrah remove poverty and sins in the same way as the furnace removes the impurities of gold, silver and iron, and there is no lesser reward on a pure and sincere *Hajj* than Paradise."
(Tirmidhi and Nasa'i)



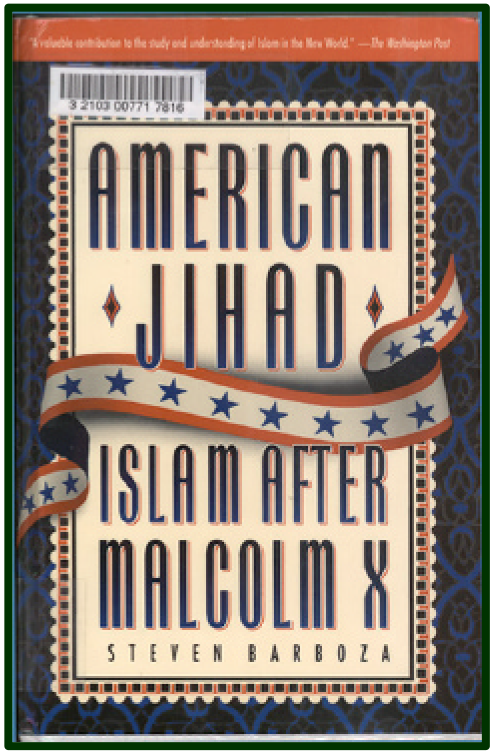
Muslims who do not go to the Middle East for *Hajj* still perform the ceremony of sacrifice. They also fast the day of ‘Arafat. The meat will be distributed to the poor in the community.

Abdullah ibn Umar reports that Allah's Messenger said:
"When you meet someone who has just performed the *Hajj*, greet him, shake hands with him and ask him to pray for the forgiveness of your sins before he reaches his home."
(Musnad Ahmed)

Abu Hurayrah reports that Allah's Messenger said:
"Whoever sets out with the intention of performing *Hajj* or *Umrah* or for *Jihad* in Allah's path and then dies in the way, the same amount of reward will be written down for him as is fixed for those who perform the *Hajj* or *Umrah* and those who carry out *Jihad* in the path of Allah."
(Bayhaqi)

Steven Barboza is an American Journalist who converted to Islam after discovering Malcolm X and his ideology. Barboza later learned that this early ideology that was held was not the true Islam and that through jihad Malcolm X becomes El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz.

Barboza, in his book 1 ***American Jihad: Islam After Malcolm X***, attempts to compile an anthology of various famous and everyday American Muslims and their stories of *jihad*. *Jihad* is not a term for bloody warfare or fighting. In Arabic it is a word that means to "strive" or to "struggle." It is against the Islamic religion to engage in aggressive fighting according to the Qur'an, the Holy Book in Islam. There basically two types of *jihads:* the greatest one is called *jihad bil nafs*, which is the *jihad* of the inner self, and the second is called *jihad fi sabilillah,* which is *jihad* for the cause of Allah. *"This jihad is carried out by word or deed- by the tongue, by the pen, or as a last resort by the hand."* Muslims are not allowed to sit by while people are oppressed and must come to their defense.



Islam possesses a religious law called, *Shari'ah* in Arabic, which governs the life of Muslims and which Muslims consider to be the embodiment of the Will of God. The *Shari'ah* is contained in principle in the Qur'an as elaborated and complemented by the *Sunna*. On the basis of these principles the schools of this day were developed early in Islamic history. This Law, while being rooted in the sources of the Islamic revelation, is a living body of law, which caters to the needs of Islamic society.

Islamic laws are essentially preventative and are not based on harsh punishment except as a last measure. The faith of the Muslim causes him to have respect for the rights of others and Islamic Law is such that it prevents transgression from taking place in most instances. That is why what people consider to be harsh punishments are so rarely in need of being applied.



ISLAMIC LAW

All for Only One God



Muslim and Bukhari related from Anas that the Prophet of Allah ﷺ said:

"No one may be said to have faith until I (Allah 'Praise be to Him and may He be glorified') have come to be held by him dearer than his son, his father, and all mankind."

"**Whoever loves but for Allah, whoever hates but for Allah, whoever befriends but for Allah, would obtain Allah's friendship**. No matter how often he prays or how long he fasts, man will not taste the sweetness of *iman (faith)*, unless this description becomes true of him. Most people befriend their friends but for the world, (not for Allah), which is utterly worthless."

All for Only One God



"Use Qur'an as your flashlight".

Imam Siraj Wahaj

Be careful of the doors you are opening, from them can come light or darkness. Know your battles before your enemy. Know your *Sunnah* and *aqeedah* (creed).

"So when you meet (in fight - *Jihâd* in Allâh's Cause) those who disbelieve, smite (their) necks till when you have killed and wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly (on them, i.e. take them as captives). Thereafter (is the time) either for generosity (i.e. **free them without ransom**), or ransom (according to what benefits Islam), until the war lays down its burden. Thus [you are ordered by Allah to continue in carrying out *Jihâd* against the disbelievers till they embrace Islam and are saved from the punishment in the Hell-fire or at least come under your protection], but if it had been Allâh's Will, **He Himself could certainly have punished them (without you). But (He lets you fight) in order to test some of you with others.** But those who are killed in the way of Allâh, he will never let their deeds be lost."

(Qur'an 4: 47)

"One important aspect of jihad to remember is that it is not just the *kital*, or war which is waged against the disbeliever, although this is the highest form and to die fighting, or to be *shaheed*, has the highest reward. Another essential and inter-related part of *jihad* is *jihad bin nafs*, or striving against the self."

HAAIC instructor

Silat

Jihad means 'holy war'. It has nothing to do with the crusades that were destined to eradicate members of another faith.
Jihad was declared only whenever there were no other solution; it was a means of defense. No Muslims go to Jihad unless he has been first attacked. Since everything a Muslim does is for Allah, the main goal is to show compassion so the enemy might embrace Islam and be saved from the Hellfire. But no Muslim would force anyone to embrace Islam; on the contrary**, a Muslim informs, never forces**. The Qur'an says: "There is no compulsion in Islam".
Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was never kept responsible for other people; he was sent to invite to Islam and to confirm the truth other Prophets (Peace be Upon Them) had delivered. Thus nobody converts anyone else; the individual chooses for himself/herself and Allah guides whom he wants to.
Consequently, as far as the means of Jihad are concerned, Muslims from Asia adopted the art of **SILAT** that is a martial art, a means of **defense.**
In China, Prior to the invention of rifles and other modem weapons, Wushu (Silat) constituted the major means of combat and self-defense. To foster perseverance and courage among the Hui people (Muslim Chinese), their chiefs called upon them to learn Wushu as a "holy practice" in the struggle for survival and self-improvement.
Readings: *Wushu Among Chinese Moslems* by Ma Xianda.

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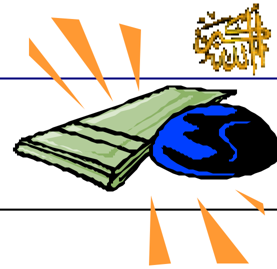
Ever wondered where the United States Marines earned the nickname, leathernecks? When the U.S. invaded the Philippines, they had the heaviest resistance from the Muslim island of Mindanao. The Muslim fighters, armed only with sticks and swords, prevailed over the U.S. Marines who were armed with automatic weapons and supported by artillery and modern machines of war. The Muslims would kill the marines with a single blow or slice at the neck. They were so effective that the U.S. government issued steel-reinforced leather collars for the marines to wear around their necks in battle. Hence the nickname, leathernecks. Not that it did them much good, though…
And it was from the scrap metal salvaged from abandoned jeeps and other military war machines that the Filipinos fashioned the notorious balisong knives (or "butterfly" knives), which could be easily concealed and quickly and effectively brought into play against an opponent.

The Ten Commandments

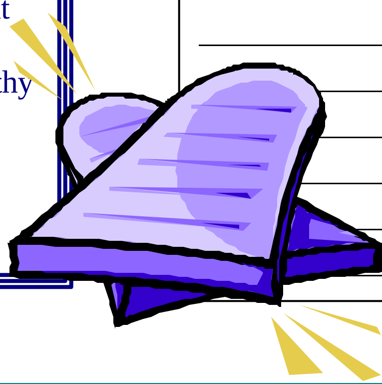
Bible (Exodus 12: 1-17 & Deuteronomy 5: 6-21)
Confirmation **in the Quran** (Chapter: Verse)







1. Thou shall not take any God except one God.
2. Thou shall make no image of God.
3. Thou shall not use God's name in vain.
4. Thou shall honor thy mother and father.
5. Thou shall not steal.
6. Thou shall not lie or give false testimony.
7. Thou shall not kill.
8. Thou shall not commit adultery.
9. Thou shall not covet thy neighbors wife or possessions.
10. Thou shall keep the Sabbath holy.



1. There is no God except one God (47:19)
2. There is nothing whatsoever like unto Him (42:11)
3. Make not God's name an excuse to your oaths (2:224)
4. Be kind to your parents if one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not a word of contempt nor repel them but address them in terms of honor. (17:23)
5. As for the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands, but those who repent After a crime and reform shall be forgiven by God for God is forgiving and kind. (5:38 - 39)
6. They invoke a curse of God if they lie. (24:7) Hide not the testimony (2:283)
7. If anyone has killed one person it is as if he had killed the whole mankind (5:32)
8. Do not come near adultery. It is an indecent deed and a way for other evils. (17:32)
9, Do good to your parents, relatives and neighbors. (4:36) Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (P) "One of the greatest sins is to have illicit sex with your neighbors wife".
10. When the call for the Friday Prayer is made, hasten to the remembrance of God and leave off your business. (62:9)